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The President's Daily Brief

27 May 1970

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~~*Top Secret*~~ 50X1

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THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

27 May 1970

PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

The latest military developments in Cambodia are outlined on *Page 1*.

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The Israelis carried out another "preventive patrol" into Lebanon yesterday. *(Page 3)*

French policy in the Mediterranean [redacted] 50X1
Page 4.

In Saigon [redacted] 50X6
[redacted] *(Page 5)* 50X6

North Vietnamese infiltrators have been ordered to resume their march to the COSVN region after having been held up in the Laos panhandle. *(Page 6)*

The new Chinese aid agreement announced by Hanoi yesterday probably will not be much different than last year's. *(Page 6)*

The Soviets [redacted] 50X1
[redacted] *(Page 6)*

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Cambodia: Current Situation

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CAMBODIA

A recent intercept indicates Communist forces are preparing to attack another provincial capital, this time Kompong Thom, an important town between the Mekong River and the rice growing areas to the west. An unidentified Vietnamese Communist unit informed a subordinate unit in the message that two battalions, including a sapper unit, will reconnoiter and then attack the town. Although no exact date is given for the attack, the message's recipient is to join the sapper unit in the southeastern corner of the province on 28 May.

The Communists have been increasingly active in this area over the past two weeks, attacking a district headquarters some ten miles from Kompong Thom on 24 and 25 May. Government reinforcements are moving into the area.

The Communists' thrust toward Kompong Thom is being mounted from an area near the Prek Kak rubber plantation in northern Kompong Cham Province. [redacted] businessmen who visited the plantation yesterday reported seeing a large number of Vietnamese troops there. 50X1

Cambodian Army messages continue to express concern over Communist infiltration in Kompong Thom. The government is increasing its patrol activities on the edge of the Tonle Sap Lake, probably in order to prevent infiltrators from contacting large numbers of Vietnamese villagers there.

* * *

In the northeast, the Communists continue to work toward development of a secure base area. Elements of a North Vietnamese regiment are now engaged in supply operations in Stung Treng Province. One message indicated that Communist troops were driving supply trucks between Siem Pang and Stung Treng towns. In Ratanakiri Province, government defenders at Lomphat reported on 25 May that the local airfield "is no longer in friendly hands," as the Communists continue to close in.

(continued)

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In the countryside southeast of Phnom Penh, Communist forces are reported to be regrouping in villages in the center of Kampot Province, in order to avoid South Vietnamese border operations. Cambodian messages assert that villagers have been defecting to the Communists and are performing supply and intelligence-gathering tasks for them.

Earlier reports had suggested that the Communists were making considerable progress among the population in this area; thus far, there has been little military action.

There have been reports that Cambodian villagers in other areas were also helping the Communists or joining hastily organized guerrilla bands. It is not clear how widespread such defections have been or whether they represent more than the accommodation of villagers to the presence of Communist troops. [redacted] *the Vietnamese Communists are placing considerable emphasis on building an indigenous Cambodian guerrilla apparatus.*

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ISRAEL-LEBANON

Israeli troops carried out another "preventive patrol" into Lebanon yesterday. General Gur, the Israeli commander in this sector, made public Israel's intention to carry out these patrols indefinitely. Gur said this new policing policy not only would protect Israeli settlements along the border, but might stop the exodus of Lebanese villagers on the other side of the frontier.

In Tel Aviv, Israeli officials are taking the line with our embassy that the patrols will make only "shallow" penetrations across the border to observe and to seek out and destroy fedayeen concentrations. Israeli forces will not seek clashes with the Lebanese Army, nor will they interfere with Lebanese villagers.

In Lebanon, labor, religious, political, and Palestinian leaders led a nationwide strike demanding stronger military measures against Israel. The strike, proclaimed "98 percent effective" by its leaders, closed schools and shops, and forced a three-hour shutdown of Beirut International Airport.

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FRANCE

The French continue to devote considerable attention to the Mediterranean, but they are showing little of their hand to the US. They rarely discuss the subject with American officials.

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SOUTH VIETNAM

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NOTES

North Vietnam: On 25 May, a major infiltration station in the Lao panhandle passed a message stating that "according to orders from headquarters, all groups going to the COSVN region are to be sent out immediately." These orders end a two-week holdup of groups already in the pipeline, caused by allied cross-border operations. This delay has affected to some degree all of the 12,000 North Vietnamese expected to arrive in the COSVN region during the months of May, June, and July.

Communist China - North Vietnam: Hanoi announced a new Chinese aid program yesterday which probably will not be much different from last year's $105 million worth of military aid and $90 million worth of economic aid. The announcement gave no details, and we are aware of only one new factor: in the past, the Chinese have satisfied only short-range economic needs, but recent visits by Chinese technicians to North Vietnam suggest that Peking might be offering assistance in rebuilding some large industrial projects.

USSR: [redacted] 50X1

Japan-Okinawa: The left is exploiting the apparent delay in removing chemical weapons from Okinawa in an effort to revive its flagging campaign against renewal of the US-Japan mutual security treaty. The issue is apt to embarrass the Sato government if further delays are encountered.

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